A Social and Material History of Italian Renaissance Sculpture

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Una D'Elia
TIME: Mondays 11:30-2:30
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CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:
The course will explore the diverse materials used for sculpture (marble, bronze, wood, clay, wax, etc.) and their social functions - how sculptures were a part of cult practices, dressing sculptures, speaking statues, miraculous sculptures, iconoclasm, reliquaries, and domestic objects.

Prerequisites: A GPA of 2.60 in a minimum of 24.0 units in ARTH courses and Level 4 and registration in an ARTH Major or Medial Plan.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course will explore a social history of Italian Renaissance sculpture. We will examine how objects made of painted wood, metal, glazed terracotta, wax, stone, leather, plaster and other materials were a part of the social and religious lives of men and women from all classes from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries. People venerated, touched, dressed, collected, hid, and attacked sculptures. Both objects made by anonymous craftsmen and those by such luminaries as Donatello were treated as if they were alive, used and abused. Rather than focusing on style or chronology, this course will explore types, such as the crucifixes with a Christ figure with hinged arms that could be folded and placed in the tomb on Good Friday, the statues of babies that nuns and wives dressed and placed in cradles, the death masks and life-size wax effigies of important personages, the devotional reliefs of the Madonna that were adorned with real jewels, and other sacred and secular objects that were paraded, caressed, opened, slashed, and even eaten.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
A detailed list of readings and requirements will be available at the first class.